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FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ABIDJAN 000955

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [IV](#)

SUBJECT: COUNTRY CLEARANCE REQUEST FOR MS. CILIA DE COCK

REF: ACCRA 1923

[1](#)1. Post warmly welcomes the visit of Ms. Cilia De Cock and grants country clearance for travel to Abidjan from AUGUST 29, 2006 TO SEPTEMBER 02, 2006.

[1](#)2. The purpose of the trip is to visit cashew processors in the southern parts of Cote d'Ivoire (OLAM in Dimbokro) and to participate in the Cashew Conference with ARECA in Yamoussoukro.

[1](#)3. Post point of contact for the visit is Erfana Dar, Economic Officer, (225) 22.49.4602, cell (225) 05.07.53.10

[1](#)4. Other pertinent information:

Crime Threat: Criminal activity constitutes the major security threat for Americans in Cote d'Ivoire. However, amidst the current crisis, the possibility of American citizens becoming caught up in any renewed violence in Abidjan cannot be ruled out. The most common types of violent crimes are armed robberies and carjackings. Although the police and gendarmes are very aware of the critical nature of the crime problem in Cote d'Ivoire, a lack of resources and training often keeps them from being able to deter crimes or apprehend those responsible for committing criminal acts.

Political Violence/Terrorism: Cote d'Ivoire's threat rating for international terrorism is currently high, while the threat rating for political violence is critical. Employees are warned that, while there is no measurable anti-American sentiment in Cote d'Ivoire, there are communities within the country that are sympathetic to the causes of certain terrorist groups operating in other parts of the world. The more immediate concern, however, relates to the political situation in Cote d'Ivoire. Cote d'Ivoire experienced a military coup in December 1999 and major incidents of political unrest since 1999 include three attempted coups, the most recent occurring on September 19, 2002. The last coup attempt also involved a major military mutiny and divided the country into two sections. The southern portion of the country remains under regular government forces' control, while the central and northern portions are under control of the former rebel movement. In early November 2004 Ivorian government forces launched aerial attacks in cities in northern Cote d'Ivoire, resulting in several deaths, including nine French soldiers and one American civilian. The French reacted by destroying most Ivorian air assets and seizing the airport. In response, there were widespread confrontations accompanied by looting, rioting, and violence in Abidjan and elsewhere. Non-emergency American employees and family members were placed in authorized departure status. The authorized departure status was

lifted on February 8, 2005 for employees and adult family members. In January 2006 there were renewed demonstrations in Abidjan and other areas, directed against the UN and French presence. The Department of State has issued several travel warnings, the most recent dated March 3, 2006. The Department of State continues to prohibit minor dependents from accompanying U.S. government employees assigned to the U.S. Embassy and urges Americans to defer non-essential travel. Extreme caution is recommended at all times when traveling within the country. Travelers to Cote d'Ivoire are encouraged to consult the travel warning prior to their arrival.

Visas: U.S. passport holders do not require visas for entry to Cote d'Ivoire for periods of less than 90 days.

Medical Requirements: All travelers must have a yellow World Health Organizations booklet bearing a valid stamp for yellow fever inoculation or risk being denied entry until they can be inoculated. For malaria prophylaxis, post recommends Mefloquine be started two weeks prior to arrival. Mefloquine is contraindicated for individuals on beta-blockers or quinidine (heart/blood pressure medications) and those with a history of epilepsy or a significant psychiatric disorder.

Excess Baggage Charges: Travelers should be aware that airlines departing Abidjan tend to apply strict overweight charges for excess baggage. Upgrade charges are routinely assessed. If transiting through Europe and traveling overnight, bags will be rechecked and if weight exceeds the authorized 20kg, charges will be

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assessed.

Airport Expediter Warning: If requested, travelers will be met at the airport by an Embassy customs and immigration expediter. It is strongly advised that, upon being met, the traveler verify the expediter's Embassy identification badge to avoid being confronted by unknown persons who claim to be Embassy-employed and offer expediter services for a fee.

Custom Clearances for Equipment: Travelers carrying toolboxes or full-size electronic devices such as computers may experience difficulty clearing customs. Please provide to the Embassy identification information (model, serial number, etc.) one week in advance of arrival to facilitate clearance. Laptop computers currently post no entry problem.

Electronic Devices: Privately owned laptops, personal computers and thumb drives are prohibited in the embassy without pre-approval by the ISSO and RSO. Government owned laptops, thumb drives and other electronic devices must also have pre-approval and adhere to 03 STATE 286036. These devices should be clearly marked with the appropriate classification level. Please forward the type of computer, thumb drive or electronic device and the serial number to your control officer prior to your arrival. This will facilitate your access to the building with these devices. The Marine Security Guard has been instructed to not permit unapproved devices into the chancery. Questions concerning other types of electronic devices may be directed to the Information Management Office or Regional Security Office.

Security Clearance: Please ensure your level of security clearance either appears on your travel orders or is otherwise passed to the regional security office upon arrival for a security update briefing.

Transportation: The demand for official vehicles often exceeds available vehicle resources. The motorpool will provide transportation for official visitors both to and from the airport and between the office and place of lodging. Visitors who have other transportation requirements either in Abidjan or outside the city should provide fiscal data and specific request for the use of a vehicle and driver at least five working days in advance.

TDY Policy: Each visitor, regardless of length of stay, must bring/forward fiscal data to pay for direct costs of the visit. Each agency, organization, or visiting delegation will be charged for the actual costs attributed to their visit. Direct charge costs include, but are not limited to: American and LES staff overtime, field travel by Embassy employees, vehicle rentals, long distance telephone calls, equipment rentals, office supplies, and all other costs directly attributable to the visit. Also, for TDYers over thirty days, there is a charge for ICASS support services. If your sponsoring agency is not signed up for ICASS services at post, please be prepared to sign an MOU for ICASS support services upon arrival. The agency should provide post with a written communication, generated by the traveler's headquarters, that states who can authorize the availability of ICASS funds, confirms the agency will pay ICASS charges for the TDYer, provides the agency ICASS billing code, and authorizes the traveler to sign the ICASS invoice generated by the TDY module. Where travel is urgent, TDYers should bring this documentation with them to ensure there are no interruptions in the provision of service. Post will not provide any service to a TDYer staying in excess of thirty days without provision of this documentation before day 31 of the TDY.

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